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(19) (CA) **APPLICATION FOR CANADIAN PATENT** (12)

(54) Diet Control Kit

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(73) Same as inventor

(30) (US) 07/853,483 1992/03/18

(57) 5 Claims

Notice: This application is as filed and may therefore contain an incomplete specification.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A diet control kit is provided in which the patient selects particular food items based upon a prescribed diet. A patient is prescribed a diet having
5 limited food exchanges. Various food items are set forth on color coded food item pieces to correspond to the food groups of the permitted food exchanges. The patient reviews his daily limit of food exchanges and selects particular food items which correspond to the allowed
10 exchanges. The total food items of any one color should correspond to the allowed exchanges of that food group. The patient then places the food item pieces in the appropriate menu section of a diet control board. The food item pieces are shaped to provide easy removal from
15 the diet control board.

TITLE

DIET CONTROL KIT

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field Of The Invention

5 The present invention relates generally to a diet control kit and method for its use. More particularly, the present invention relates to a diet control kit to be used to teach patients placed on a restrictive diet how to plan and prepare daily menus.

10 2. Description Of The Prior Art

 Many people, especially older adults, are being prescribed special diets to be followed and used concurrently with or without medication. Frequently, these patients become confused when diet information is presented to them in a written, multi-page report or booklet. As a result, many patients do not even try to follow the prescribed diet because of its complexity.

 Included among the prescribed diets are specialized diets prepared by the American Dietetic Association. Such diets assist in controlling total calories, and provide information concerning the amount and type of food groups permitted in the diet. However, the diet is somewhat difficult to explain in written form and even more complicated to use. The diet instructs the patient to consider his food input as exchanges and limit

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his daily intake of food to certain exchanges of foods from the various food groups.

An example of 1500 calorie per day diet includes the following exchanges of food from the following food groups:

- 5 exchanges of carbohydrates;
- 4 exchanges of meats;
- 4 exchanges of fruits;
- 4 exchanges of vegetables;
- 3 exchanges of fats; and
- 2 exchanges of dairy products.

Although the diet sets forth the recommended daily allowance of food from each of the food groups, the diet does not assist the patient in directly planning and organizing his meal.

Several methods and diet control kit in the past have attempted to assist the patient in planning his meals. U.S. Patent No. 4,310,316 to Thomann discloses a diet control kit which provides lists of various food categories with each of the categories listing specific items of food and quantities thereof which may be obtained with a single ticket. A plurality of containers corresponding to the number of meals to be eaten during the day are provided. These containers contain a number of tickets which are redeemable for obtaining a quantity of diet-selected specific food items within the food

category designated by the ticket. As the tickets are redeemed during the day, the tickets are considered spent and are placed within a container bank for collection.

U.S. Patent No. 4,828,498 to Tilney discloses a
5 food exchange kit and method of constructing and
utilizing the same wherein cards are used. Each of the
cards represents one food exchange in a particular one of
the major food groups. A self-adhesive label
corresponding to a meal is applied to a card in
10 accordance with the predetermined diet. Additional
labels are provided to foods or their packages for
identifying the food as being in the indicated group. To
plan a meal, one takes all the cards for that meal and
searches his pantry or refrigerator for correspondingly-
15 labeled food items.

These prior art menu aids are helpful to the
extent that they permit the patient to outline the food
groups he will have available at any one particular meal.
However, these menu aids do not assist in the actual
20 selection of the particular food items to be eaten during
any one meal. The patient must refer either to a diet
book which lists various food items under each of the
food exchanges or look for labeled products stored apart
from the menu aid in order to complete and design a meal.

25 U.S. Patent No. 4,832,603 to Basil discloses a
teaching aid and daily food consumption planner in which

a diet instruction setting forth the precise number of food exchanges to be consumed at each meal or snack is permanently provided on a display panel. Basil utilizes movable members to represent the food items. However, these movable members are difficult to grasp and pull away from the board. Consequently, Basil uses a large food group display zone to hold all the movable members. The patient can then slide the movable members from the food group display zone to the meal display zone.

Consequently, there is a need for a diet control kit which permits the patient to select the particular food items which he will consume during the meals of the day.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A diet control kit is provided which permits the patient to select the food items he or she will consume in any one day based upon a predetermined diet plan. The diet control kit includes a diet board which is separated into a menu area and a work area. The menu area is, in turn, separated into four sections, each section relating to a different daily meal, i.e., breakfast, lunch, dinner and snack. A menu is provided which sets forth the total number of food exchanges which the patient is allowed to consume during any one day. The menu sets forth daily limits for each of six food groups: carbohydrates, fats,

meats, fruits, vegetables and dairy products. Meal cards are provided to allow a patient to break down the total food exchanges among each meal. Color-coded food item pieces are utilized to identify various food items which correspond to one exchange within any of the food groups. The patient can take as many food item pieces allotted to him during any particular day and plan a whole day's menu based on the prescribed limit of food exchanges for the day.

10 In order for the patient to best visualize his daily menu, it is advantageous for the diet board to hang vertically on a wall or refrigerator door. Consequently, the food item pieces must be capable of being securely fastened to the diet board. The diet board can be made
15 of metal and the food item pieces can be made of a magnetic substance. In order to assist the elderly in using the diet kit, the food item pieces should be shaped to provide easy removal from the diet board. In addition, the menu and meal cards can also be made of a
20 material which is adapted to be securely fastened to the diet board.

The work area of the diet board can be used by a patient to store those food item pieces regularly consumed by the patient. In addition, the patient can
25 use the work area to contain the most regularly used meal cards.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is a front elevational view of a presently preferred embodiment of the diet control board for use in the present invention.

5 Figure 2 is a front elevational view of the menu and meal cards which can be used with the diet control board of Figure 1.

 Figure 3 is a side elevational view of a food item piece which can be used with the diet control board
10 of Figure 1.

 Figure 4 is a top plan view of the food item piece of Figure 3.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

 The diet control kit of the present invention
15 allows a patient to plan his entire day's meals based on food items and not food exchanges. A diet board 10 includes menu selection area 20, diet instruction 30 and work area 40. Menu selection area 20 is in turn divided into four sections, each section corresponding to a
20 different meal to be consumed during the day. These sections are breakfast section 22, lunch section 24, dinner section 26 and snack section 28. Preferably snack section 28 is subdivided into individual snack areas 29 to accommodate up to 3 separate snacks into the daily
25 meal plan. When using the diet control kit, the patient

removes a food item piece 42 from the kit and places it in the appropriate menu section area 20. If desired, the patient can store the most often used food item pieces 42 in work areas 40.

5 Diet instruction 30, as best shown in Figure 2, sets forth a restrictive diet in which the patient is limited to a certain number of food exchanges in any one day. According to the diet shown in Figure 2, the patient is restricted to five exchanges of carbohydrates,
10 four exchanges of meats, four exchanges of fruits, four exchanges of vegetables, two exchanges of dairy products, and three exchanges of fats. By allocating the various food exchanges throughout the meals for any one day, the patient can follow the prescribed diet. Figure 2 also
15 shows meal cards 32 which break down the diet instruction 30 into the individual meals. The total of the food exchanges for each food group on meal cards 32 should equal the number of food exchanges set forth on diet instruction 30.

20 Preferably, as shown in Figure 4, food item pieces 42 are color coded by means of a border 50 on an adhesive label applied to the upper surface 46 of food item piece 42 to identify the food item as belonging to one of the six food groups set forth on the diet. The
25 color scheme of the border 50 of the food item pieces 42 can follow any pattern so long as the particular color of

each food group is sufficiently distinguishable from the color of any of the other food groups. Preferably, the food item pieces are color coded to correspond to the internationally recognized colors of food groups: meat
5 being red; dairy products being blue; fats being yellow; vegetables being green; fruits being orange; and carbohydrates being brown.

The adhesive label for each of the food item pieces 42 is provided with a particular food item which
10 corresponds to one exchange of food according to the prescribed diet. For example, if an eight ounce hot dog corresponds to one meat food exchange, then the label for one food item piece 42 whose border is color coded to designate meats is provided with the reference "Eight
15 Ounce Hot Dog" thereon. By using the adhesive labels, multiple copies of various exchange levels of particular food items are not needed. Blank adhesive labels can be provided to allow the patient to update the food items 42 to include more and different foods.

20 To use the diet control kit of the present invention, the patient reviews the diet instructions 30 or meal cards 32 and selects various food items he wishes to consume during the day. The patient then selects a food item piece 42 corresponding to that item and places
25 the food item piece 42 in the particular meal section of menu selection area 20. By focusing on food items

instead of food exchanges, the patient is given the opportunity to prepare a day's menu using only the diet control kit as a reference. This approach for preparing and planning a diet is much easier for the patient to understand and eliminates the need to constantly refer to booklets which relate food exchanges to food items.

Preferably, the patient should meet with a dietitian or other qualified health care professional to identify various foods which the patient enjoys. These foods should be categorized according to the particular food group and labels for the food item pieces 42 should be prepared for each such food item. In this manner, a diet control kit 10 custom formatted to an individual patient can be prepared. Additional food items should be provided on other labels for food item pieces 42 to add variety to the patient's menu. If desired, the dietitian can, in addition to providing the diet instruction 30, allocate the food exchanges among the meals by completing meal cards 32.

To best utilize the diet control kit, diet board 10 should be adapted to hang or be supported on a wall or other vertical surface such as a refrigerator door. Consequently, there must be some means provided to secure food item pieces 42 to diet board 10. I have found that a metal board with magnetic food item pieces 42 works well for this purpose. In addition, the diet

instructions 30 and meal cards 32 can also be formed of a magnetic material to allow the patient to place these cards in the menu area 20 or work area 40 at his preference.

5 As shown in Figure 3, food item piece 42 has a trapezoidal cross-section in which the smaller parallel surface 44 is adapted to contact diet board 10. Larger parallel surface 46 is adapted to receive an adhesive label containing the particular food item to which food
10 item piece 42 corresponds. The trapezoidal cross-section of food item piece 42 assists the patient in using the diet control kit. By pushing down on either end 48 of upper surface 46 of food item piece 42, the food item piece 42 will tip, thereby allowing patients having
15 limited digital dexterity to easily remove food item pieces 42 from diet board 10.

 Preferably, the meal sections 22, 24, 26 and 28 are arranged on diet board 10 in the manner shown in Figure 1. The prominence of menu selection area 20 with
20 respect to the remaining portions of diet board 10 permits the patient to focus on the meal sections 22, 24, 26 and 28. Moreover, the placement of snack section 28 to the left of dinner section 26 reinforces to the patient that the snacks are to be distributed throughout
25 the day and not reserved until after dinner.

In the foregoing specification, certain preferred practices and embodiments of this invention have been set out. However, it will be understood that the invention may be otherwise embodied within the scope
5 of the following claims.

I Claim:

1. A diet control kit to permit a dieter to allocate food exchanges among the meals he or she will consume in any one day based upon a diet plan and select the food items from a plurality of food groups he or she will consume in any one day based upon said diet plan comprising a diet board, a food item bank containing a plurality of food item pieces, said food item pieces adapted to be secured to said diet board, said food item pieces having a trapezoidal cross-section the smaller parallel surface of which is adapted to contact said diet board, said diet board having a menu selection area, a diet instruction area and a work area, said menu selection area divided into a plurality of meal sections, each of said plurality of meal sections corresponding to a meal to be consumed during the day, said diet instruction area setting forth a prescribed diet of the aggregate total number of food exchanges to be consumed during the day for each of the food groups, each of said food item pieces identifying a particular food item and coded to correspond to one exchange of one of the food groups set forth in said diet, whereby a sufficient number of food item pieces coded to correspond to a each particular food group are removed from said food item bank, said sufficient number corresponding to said

aggregate total number of food exchanges prescribed by the diet and said sufficient number of food item pieces are allocated among said plurality of meal sections in the menu selection area at the discretion of the dieter who is restricted solely by the limitation that said sufficient number of food item pieces allocated among said plurality of meal sections is equal to said aggregate total number of food exchanges prescribed by the diet.

2. The diet control kit of claim 1 wherein said food item pieces include an adhesive label applied to the larger parallel surface, the adhesive label including a border, said border coded by color to correspond to one of said food groups.

3. The diet control kit of claim 1 wherein said diet board is adapted to hang vertically and said plurality of food item pieces are adapted to be secured to said diet board.

4. The diet control kit of claim 3 wherein said diet board is formed of a metal material and said plurality of food item pieces are formed of a magnetic material.

5. A method for using a diet control kit to permit a dieter to allocate food exchanges among the meals he or she will consume in any one day based upon a diet plan and select the food items from a plurality of food groups he or she will consume in any one day based upon said diet plan, said diet control kit including a diet board and a plurality of food item pieces adapted to be secured to said diet board, said food item pieces having a trapezoidal cross-section the smaller parallel surface of which is adapted to contact said diet board, said diet board having a menu selection area, a diet instruction area and a work area, said menu selection area divided into a plurality of meal sections, each of said plurality of meal sections corresponding to a meal to be consumed during the day, said diet instruction area setting forth the prescribed diet of the aggregate total number of food exchanges to be consumed during the day for each of the food groups, each of said food item pieces identifying a particular food item and coded to correspond to one exchange of one of the food groups set forth in said diet, comprising the steps of:

(a) reviewing said prescribed diet of aggregate total number of food exchanges;

(b) selecting a sufficient number of said food item pieces to correspond to said aggregate total number

of food exchanges to be consumed during the day for each of the food groups; and

(c) allocating said sufficient number of food item pieces among said plurality of meal sections at the discretion of said dieter restricted solely by the limitation that said sufficient number of food item pieces allocated among said plurality of meal sections is equal to said aggregate total number of food exchanges prescribed by the diet.

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Fig. 1.

Fig. 1 shows a meal plan form (10) with four main sections: BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER, and SNACKS. Each section contains a table for tracking nutrients. The LUNCH section is further divided into a MEAL PLAN table (30) and a nutrient table (32). The SNACKS section is divided into a nutrient table (32) and a table (28). The form also includes a table (20) for tracking total calories.

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22		24		26		28																																																											
30		32		32		32																																																											
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Fig. 3.

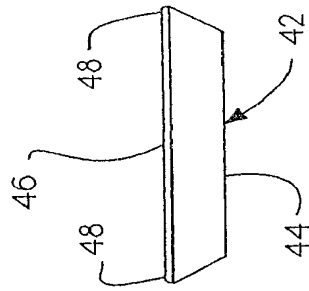


Fig. 4.

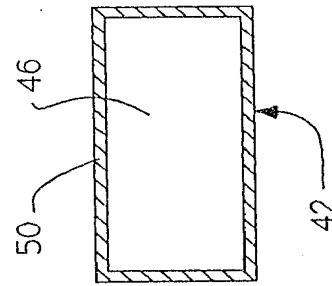
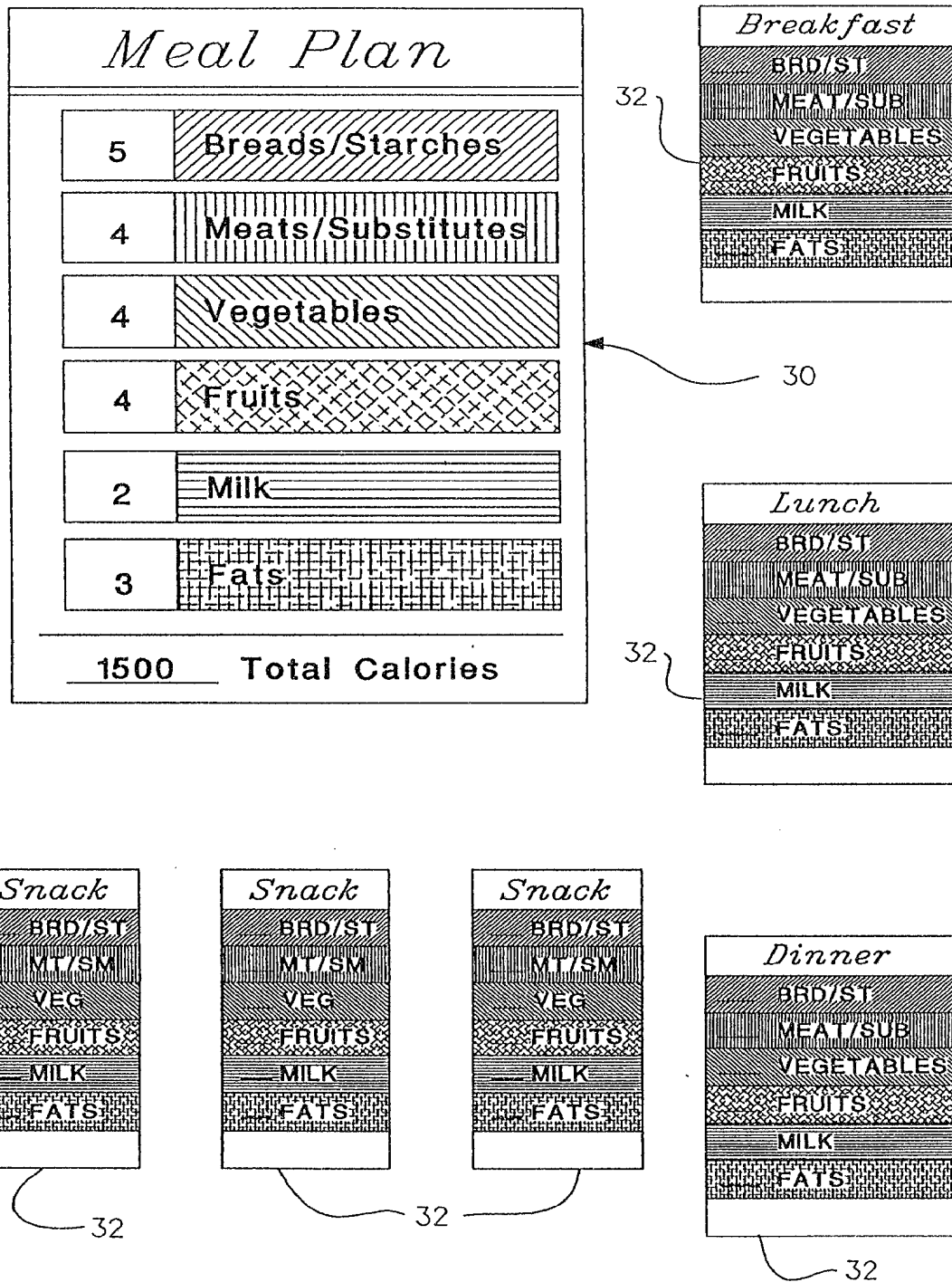


Fig. 2.



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